

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANILA 002242

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EAP/PMBS, INR/EAP, S/CT, USIP - SOLOMON
NSC FOR GREEN
SEOUL FOR ERIC JOHN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/16/2015

TAGS: [PTER](#) [RP](#)

SUBJECT: MILF COMMANDER SAMIR DENIES LINKS TO JI, PLEDGES
COOPERATION

REF: A. MANILA 1898

[1](#)B. MANILA 1470

Classified By: Political Officer Joseph Saus
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. MILF Base Commander Hadji Samir Hashim, in a recent letter, has denied all links to Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), and pledged to locate, arrest, and turn over to authorities any JI operatives in his area of responsibility. Given what we believe to know about Samir's past connections with JI operatives, which led Embassy to recommend his designation by the USG as a foreign terrorist (reftels), this profession is disingenuous but may indicate also that he is reconsidering his links to the JI. We will follow up with his nephew (one of the candidates in the ARMM gubernatorial race) should new evidence of his complicity arise. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) During a May 3 meeting with Datu Ibrahim "Toto" Paglas -- a close Embassy contact and candidate in the upcoming August 2005 race for governor of the Autonomous Region In Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) -- Ambassador emphasized that Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) leaders and military base commanders had to break any and all ties with, support for, and tolerance of suspected terrorists within their operating areas. Ambassador cited two suspect base commanders -- Ameril Kato and Samir Hashim (reftels). (Note: Samir Hashim and his brother -- the late Moro Islamic Liberation Front Chairman Salamat -- are Paglas' uncles. End Note.)

[1](#)3. (SBU) Paglas expressed doubt that his uncle had any such ties, but promised the Ambassador he would contact Samir directly. On May 10, Paglas' intermediary provided poloff a letter, apparently signed by Samir but not dated, written in Maguindanaoan and accompanied by an informal English translation (text in para 5). Notably, Samir claimed that there were no Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) operatives within his Base Command, and pledged that, if he discovered any, he would turn them over to "the appropriate authorities."

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: The body of evidence suggests that Samir is disingenuous in his claim of no past or current ties with the JI. However, he may be reaching a point where he, like his late brother, is ready to make a choice toward peace and against terrorism, and the threat of designation as a foreign terrorist may be helping in making the right choice, along with pressure from his nephew, who very much wants to win the ARMM election. We should be ready to follow up should new evidence of complicity arise. Embassy will also attempt to discover any new signs of cooperation through the GRP-MILF Ad Hoc Joint Action Group (AHJAG) -- recently operationalized to jointly investigate and intercept suspected terrorist and criminal elements. End comment

[1](#)5. (SBU) Informal English text:

quote

Moro Islamic Liberation Front
Headquarters
National Guard Base Command
Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces
Camp Abubakar As-Siddique

In the name of our group, the National Guard Base Command, Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces, I want to assure all concern (sic) that we have not and we will never be a friend of the Jamaa Islamia, nor provide them sanctuary within our area of responsibility.

The reason of this stand is we do not know why this group are here, if they are indeed here in our area and what they are fighting for. Moreover, I do not understand or speak Arabic or English languages.

Our Group also intensely dislike these people (Jamaa Islamia) because we believed that there (sic) presence could cause serious troubles among the peace loving Bangsamoro people. Because of this fear, we will drive them away or prevent them

from entering our area, including their local sympathizers, if there are any.

And finally, if there are members or sympathizers of Jamaa Islamia hiding in our area of responsibility, then we commit and pledge in locating them, arrest them and turn them over to the appropriate authorities.

Sukran and Wassalam. (Thank you and greetings.)

(Signed)

Hadji Samir Hashim, Base Commander

End quote

MUSSOMELI